Recognition to a shepherd for information on Pak's plan to attack Kargil

1519. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a shepherd had given first hand information to the army about the movement of Pakistani security forces to attack Kargil;

(b) if so, whether Government had appreciated his national spirit and awarded him for enabling Indian forces to repulse the Pakistani attack; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to do so now to enthuse patriotism among people living in Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. In fact, Pakistani intrusion in the Batalik Sector was first reported by two shepherds to the Indian Army. These two shepherds were suitably rewarded by the local unit of the Army.

Publishing of speculative media reports on sensitive subjects

1520. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsreport under the caption "Army proposes mid-June Shine: Reports", appeared in The Hindustan Times, dated the 7th June, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps, if any, proposed to be taken to prevent the publication of such highly speculative media reports on an extremely sensitive subject in the interest of amity and peace?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The newsreport under the caption "Army Proposes Mid-June Strike, Report" in the Hindustan Times, dated 7th June, 2002 is based on a speculative and conjectured report that appeared in the "Daily Telegraph", published from London. The Daily Telegraph in turn quoted undisclosed diplomative sources for its story.

(b) there has been no official statement, press release or disclosure by the Army on this subject.

(c) India has a free press and Government does not follow a restrictive policy towards the press.

Indo-Us cross-servicing agreement

1521. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to sign a cross-servicing agreement with the United States in near future;

(b) if so,the details thereof;

(c) whether the United States has already signed this type of treaty with Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) An Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with the United States is under the consideration of the Government.

(c) and (d) As per available information, an Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement was signed between Pakistan and United States on February 9, 2002. The Agreement seeks to facilitate the reciprocal provision of logistics support.

Curbing terror by Pakistan

1522. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Army has indicated that there is no sign of Pakistan curbing terror;

(b) if so, whether according to Army sources, Pakistan Army adds fresh batches of Taliban terrorists crossing the border;

(c) if so, whether border firing continues on the LoC on a large scale; and